

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 13
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY SENATORS KELLY, Fairclough, Giessel, Meyer, Micciche, Bishop

Introduced: 2/7/14

Referred: Health and Social Services

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the governor to establish and support programs designed to eradicate the**
2 **occurrence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder from the state.**

3 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 **WHEREAS** fetal alcohol spectrum disorder permanently alters a child's cognitive
5 abilities; and

6 **WHEREAS** fetal alcohol spectrum disorder has been identified as a pervasive and
7 chronic driver of numerous social challenges throughout the state; and

8 **WHEREAS** the occurrence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder in the state is
9 preventable; and

10 **WHEREAS** each child born with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder costs the state as
11 much as \$4,200,000 during the child's lifetime; and

12 **WHEREAS** Alaska has the highest documented prevalence of fetal alcohol spectrum
13 disorders in the United States; and

14 **WHEREAS**, according to the Alaska Maternal and Child Health Data Book, the
15 overall prevalence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders in the state is 112.9 for each 10,000 live
16 births; and

1 **WHEREAS**, while the state currently maintains high quality screening for fetal
2 alcohol spectrum disorder, further advancement in rapid assessment and neo-natal screening
3 capability is needed; and

4 **WHEREAS**, in 2012, the legislature passed legislation making the existence of fetal
5 alcohol spectrum disorder a mitigating factor for criminal sentencing; and

6 **WHEREAS** using fetal alcohol spectrum disorder as a mitigating factor at criminal
7 sentencing is currently being hindered by the lack of available, effective, and timely fetal
8 alcohol spectrum disorder screening within the Department of Corrections; and

9 **WHEREAS** misconceptions continue to exist regarding the causal factors and lifelong
10 effects of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder; and

11 **WHEREAS**, according to research conducted by the Substance Abuse and Mental
12 Health Service Administration, 90 percent of women stop drinking once they learn they are
13 pregnant; and

14 **WHEREAS**, because the highest risk of fetal exposure to alcohol occurs during the
15 time between conception and knowledge of the pregnancy, it is critical that a woman learns
16 that she is pregnant as early as possible in the gestational period; and

17 **WHEREAS** the state presently lacks sufficient residential substance abuse treatment
18 services focusing on women who are pregnant and experiencing alcohol or drug addiction, or
19 both; and

20 **WHEREAS** the occurrence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder in the state can be
21 eradicated through focused efforts and effective collaboration;

22 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the governor to establish
23 and to support programs designed to eradicate the occurrence of fetal alcohol spectrum
24 disorder from the state; and be it

25 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports a strong public
26 awareness campaign designed to inform, move, and motivate state residents in an effort to
27 prevent the occurrence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder in the state; and be it

28 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports programs that
29 will minimize the risk of fetal exposure to alcohol; and be it

30 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the governor
31 to increase the capability of rapid screening for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder within the

1 Department of Corrections and the Department of Health and Social Services; and be it
2 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature encourages the governor
3 to take actions to expand residential substance abuse treatment services in the state for women
4 who are pregnant and concurrently experiencing alcohol and drug addiction challenges,
5 including exploring appropriate partnerships to prioritize the admission of pregnant women
6 into homes operated by the Indian Health Services for the care of women.